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Amby

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A to Z Index

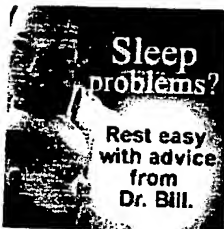
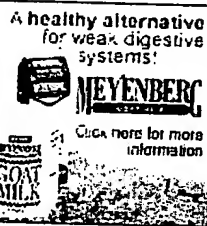


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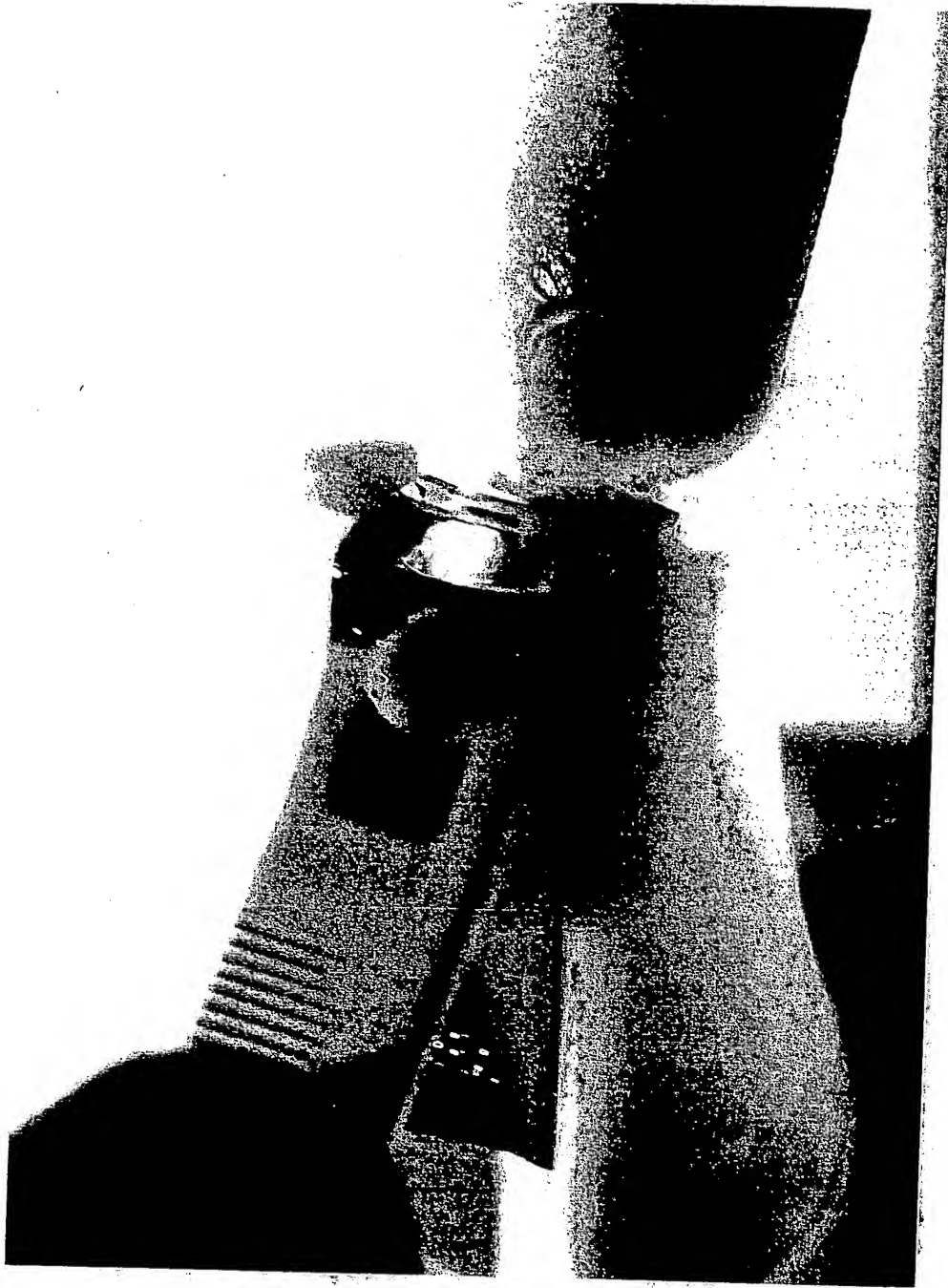
CUTTING BABY'S FINGERNAILS

Some newborns enter the world with fingernails so long that they need to be cut right away to prevent them from scratching their faces. Expect your newborn's nails to grow very fast and don't be afraid to cut them. If you're timid about cutting your baby's fingernails, as many parents are, here's how to make it easier:

- Trim your baby's fingernails while baby is in a state of deep **sleep**, recognized by the **limp-limb sign**: Baby's limbs dangle limply, and the hands are wide open.
- Use a **miniature nail clipper** designed especially for babies. They are much easier and safer than scissors or adult-sized clippers, and baby's paper-thin nails are so easy to cut anyway. If not using a nail clipper, use safety scissors with blunt ends in case baby startles during the cutting.
- To avoid snipping the **fingertip skin** as you clip the nail, depress the finger pad away from the nail as you cut. As a beginning nail cutter, have your spouse hold baby's hand while you manipulate the finger and the nail clipper. After a while you will be able to trim baby's nails by yourself.
- Drawing a drop of blood is part of learning nail trimming. Apply a bit of pressure and a dab of antibiotic ointment to the little nip.
- If you're squeamish about cutting tiny nails, cover them with cotton mittens.

A baby's **toenails** do not seem to grow as fast, and quite often the nails are surrounded with heaped-up skin, making trimming difficult. Don't worry that the toenails may grow into this skin. Ingrown toenails are rarely a problem in infants.

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